

[News story: Asian hornet: UK sightings in 2018](#)

Updated: Added finding in Dungeness, Kent

The [Asian hornet \(*Vespa velutina*\)](#) is a species of hornet which is not native to the UK. It is smaller than our native hornet and poses no greater risk to human health than other hornets or bees.

However, they do pose a risk to honey bees and pollinating insects. This is why we are keen to stop this insect establishing in the UK, and why you should report suspected sightings.

When a sighting is confirmed, experts from the National Bee Unit (NBU) and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) will work quickly to find and destroy any active nests in the area.

Current situation

To date, there have been 13 confirmed sightings of the Asian hornet in England and six nests have been destroyed.

Nine of these sightings occurred in 2018; an individual hornet in Lancashire (April) and Hull, three in Cornwall, two in Hampshire, one in Surrey (all September) and the latest in Kent (October).

It is crucial you report any possible sightings so our experts can take quick and effective action to eradicate Asian hornets.

Nicola Spence, Chief Plant Health Officer, said:

By ensuring we are alerted to possible sightings as early as possible, we can take swift and effective action to stamp out the threat posed by Asian hornets.

While the Asian hornet poses no greater risk to human health than a bee, we recognise the damage they can cause to honey bee colonies and other beneficial insects.

Please continue to look out for any Asian hornets and if you think you've spotted one, report your sighting through the Asian hornet app or online.

How to spot an Asian hornet

Asian hornets:

- have a dark brown or black velvety body
- have a yellow or orange band on fourth segment of abdomen
- have yellow tipped legs
- are smaller than the native European hornet
- are not active at night

Guidance on [how to identify an Asian hornet](#).

How to report an Asian hornet

If you suspect you have seen an Asian hornet you should report this using the 'Asian Hornet Watch' app:

- [Asian Hornet Watch app for iPhone](#)
- [Asian Hornet Watch app for android](#)

You can also report sightings by email: alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk. Please include information on location, date and number of Asian hornets you have seen. Please also include a photo if you can to help our experts identify the insect.

Alternatively, you can fill out an [online report form](#)

If you find a nest, don't try to remove it yourself – it can be dangerous and should only be done by experts.

What to do if you keep bees

If you keep bees, you should:

Read our guidance on the Asian Hornet

- [Asian hornet information pages of BeeBase](#)
- [Asian hornet ID sheet](#)
- [Asian hornet poster](#)
- ['How to obtain a sample' guidance](#)

Monitor for its arrival

Use [monitoring traps](#) in your apiaries. Watch our video on how to make a monitoring trap:

Watch our [video on how to make a monitoring trap](#)

Ensure your BeeBase records are up to date with apiary locations

We encourage you to update your apiary records online and record if you have set Asian Hornet traps.

- [Guidance on how to update your records](#).

Report any suspect sightings

If you suspect you have seen an Asian hornet you should report this using the iPhone and Android app 'Asian Hornet Watch', by filling out an [online report form](#) or by emailing alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk.

Visiting countries where Asian hornet is widespread

The Asian hornet is native to China but arrived in Europe in 2004 and is now widespread in parts of France, Spain, the Channel Islands and Portugal.

It presents no greater risk to human health than a bee so there is no need for you to take extra precautions in these countries.

However, there have been cases where Asian hornets have been found in bags or camping equipment of travellers returning from those countries, particularly in spring and late autumn.

Before returning to the UK you should check your luggage, especially if it's been kept outside during your trip. If you do spot an Asian hornet on your return to the UK you should report it with the dates and places you went on holiday, and ideally a photo of the insect.

Recent confirmed sightings and announcements

- *Dungeness, Kent – confirmed 15 October 2018
- * Guildford, Surrey – confirmed 28 September 2018
- * Brockenhurst, Hampshire – confirmed 26 September 2018 – nest destroyed
- * [New Alresford, Hampshire](#) – confirmed 24 September 2018 – nest destroyed
- * [Fowey, Cornwall](#) – confirmed 20 September 2018 – nest destroyed
- * [Hull, Yorkshire](#) – confirmed 9 September 2018 – single dead hornet
- * [Liskeard, Cornwall](#) – confirmed 7 September 2018 – single dead hornet
- * [Fowey, Cornwall](#) – confirmed 3 September 2018 – nest destroyed
- * [Bury, Lancashire](#) – confirmed 13 April 2018 – single hornet sighted with photograph